



State of Vermont
Vermont Department of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

MEMORANDUM

From: Greg Wylde, Alternate Assessment Program Coordinator
Cindy Moran, Alternate Assessment Program Coordinator
To: Assessment Coordinators, Special Education Directors, High School Principals
Subject: **Rollout of Fundamental Changes to the Vermont Alternate Assessment**
Date: August 26, 2008

The Vermont Department of Education (VT DOE) has entered into a 2 year Compliance Agreement with the U.S. Department of Education (USED) to bring the state's alternate assessment into full conformity with the provisions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). In school year 2008-2009, the Vermont Alternate Assessment must exclusively measure academic achievement in the core content areas of reading, mathematics, and science for students with the most significant disabilities. In an effort to align more directly with, and create legitimate access to, the general curriculum, assessment outcomes will be directly related to the content area Grade Expectations and many of the former learning outcomes from the PAAGE assessment (e.g., **functional life skill behaviors**) **will not be scored proficient** on the new assessment.

In company with this significant shift in content focus, the new assessment will require a **new application process** that includes completion of the updated Documentation of Eligibility and the development and declaration of academic annual goals. Teams must also submit evaluation procedures and baseline sample(s) that effectively establish the student's present levels of performance relative to the Grade Expectations and determine appropriate levels of support. While these actions mirror the IEP process, and parent participation in assessment decisions is strongly encouraged, teams *will not be required* to reconvene the educational team to draft assessment specific goals.

To facilitate this process of the identification and measurement of general curriculum academic goals, the Grade Expectations have been prioritized and reformatted as **Core Standard Learning Progressions**. While still in draft form, the learning progressions and accompanying guidelines will be made available to the field in early September prior to the scheduled rollout trainings in the [latter half of the month](#). Training sessions will also include the dissemination of new forms and explication of new procedures and expectations for documentation. Given the degree of change and immediacy of the implementation, all case managers working with this population of students are urged to sign up for and participate in one of these regional trainings. **Prior experience with the alternate assessment will be insufficient to assure effective completion of the new assessment.** Accordingly, no applications for the assessment will be accepted by department until Oct 1, 2008. Formal deadline for the new eligibility documentation will continue to be November 15, 2008. Portfolio years remain grades 2-7 & 10 for reading and mathematics with the addition of science in grades 4, 7 & 10.

Rollout Training Sessions:
2008-2009 Vermont Alternate Assessment
(formally PAAGE)
(Updated 9/11/08)

Date	Location	Time
September 15, 2008	North County Career Center 209 Veterans Avenue, Newport	8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
September 16, 2008	Rutland Holiday Inn, 476 U.S. Route 7 South, Rutland	8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
September 18, 2008	Green Mountain Technology and Career Center 738 Route 15 West, Hyde Park	8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
September 22, 2008	Hampton Inn Colchester 42 Mountain View Drive, Colchester	8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
September 23, 2008	Southwest Vermont Career Development Center 321 Park Street, Bennington	8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
September 25, 2008	Best Western Waterbury-Stowe Inn 45 Blush Hill Road, Waterbury	12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
September 26, 2008	River Valley Technical Center 307 South Street, Springfield	8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

TO REGISTER: Contact Nancy Hill at nancy.hill@state.vt.us or (802) 828-3124.

NOTE: Regrettably, due to budget constraints, the department is unable to provide food and beverages at these trainings. Please bring what you need to be comfortable.